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NOTES AND QUERIES

AMERICAN BALLADS.—The writer of this communication is making extended researches into the history of certain American folk-ballads, and takes this opportunity of requesting information from readers of the Journal.

1. *Fair Charlotte* (*Young Charlotte, Lottie*).—Of a young woman who freezes to death by her lover's side, while riding in a sleigh with him to a Christmas Eve ball. This ballad was composed by William L. Carter of Benson, Vt., before 1833. It is current in popular tradition from Nova Scotia westward through the States from New England to Dakota, and southward to Oklahoma.

2. *Jealous Lover* (*Florilla, Emma, Nellie, Lena, Aurilla, Ella, Abbie Summers, Weeping Willows*).—Of a youth who takes his lady-love to walk in the woods and there stabs her, being stricken with remorse as she dies, forgiving him. This ballad, of unknown authorship, is current from Nova Scotia westward and southward through the States, New England to Kentucky, and westward to Missouri. Some texts contain stanzas derived from a song "She Never Blamed Him," by Thomas H. Bayly.

3. *Casey Jones* (*Cassidy, Shannon, etc.*).—Of the last run of an engineer, who becomes a hero by sticking to the throttle and going down in a wreck with his engine, while the fireman jumps to safety. This ballad, ascribed to the agile fireman, is current throughout the country, and is the source of the well-known vaudeville song.

Information is eagerly desired concerning the origin, authorship, and currency of these ballads, and particularly texts and melodies, for which the undersigned will be duly grateful to readers of the Journal, as being desirous of collecting all known versions.

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TWO ABNAKI LEGENDS.—The following legends are from the tribes belonging to the Confederacy, whose name, Abnaki, means "the whitening sky at daybreak," or the "Eastern people." I remember hearing a Passamaquoddy, I believe it was, tell one of their Creation myths which I think has never been published. He was around selling baskets in Augusta, Me.; and in reply to some question of my grandmother's, he told this story to show the Indian's belief in his divine right to all the land. I was a little child at the time, and the language made an impression on my mind. I give the story in his own words, as nearly as I can remember them, as told at my childhood's home in Augusta, Me.

1. *Creation Myth*.—When the Great Spirit come to make man, he grab up some clay from *anywhere*, an' slap it together *anyhow*, an' toss him into the oven to bake. He got burnt to a crisp, so his hair kinked all up; an' this was the black man. Then the Great Spirit threw him way across the big water.

Then he pick out some better clay, an' put it into shape more careful, an' put him in the oven to bake. This one come out slack done, an' he was the "pale-face." Then the Great Spirit threw him over the big water straight towards the sunrise.

But the Great Spirit no give up; an' He said, "This time there's goin' to be a man just right every way." So He look all round an' pick out the very best clay, an' put it together so as to have every part of him just right. An' all the time he was in the oven the Great Spirit watch every minute, an' take him out when he had just the right bake on; an' this was the red man that was made to live right here, an' everything was made for him, an' the Great Spirit gave him all this land.

It is impossible to convey to you the full idea of this Indian's self-sufficiency as he swept his arm around and declared their divinely given rights.

One of the most beautiful of all their legends was told to my father by a Penobscot chief. This has never been published in full, and I am not sure that a single sentence of the story has ever been in print.

My father was quick to catch the meaning of any story which the Indians told in their dialect or broken English; but he preferred to give me this in his own language, because at first I was too young to grasp more than the outlines of the legend. It was not until I had learned the names of our common trees and plants, and knew something of the habits of animals, that I fully comprehended the story, although I was never tired of hearing it.

2. *Origin of Vegetation.* — This bit of folk-lore is of the *old*, OLD time when there was not a blade of grass to be found in all the land, and there was not a leaf on any tree except those needle-shaped ones that grow on the pines and hemlocks. It was so bleak and cold that the little animals crept into hollow trees and holes in the ground to get warm, and the larger beasts hid themselves in caves.

Then the Great Spirit pitied His children, and He sent a wonderful goddess to visit the earth. She ran over the hills and through the valleys, bringing warmth and gladness everywhere. She just looked at the bare trees, and green leaves came out on them.

Wherever her glance rested, there appeared beautiful flowers, as if in response to her look. Wherever she touched the earth in any way (hand, elbow, wrist, or any part of her body), something was sure to grow that was good to eat. Every plant had life in itself, and all helped the Great Spirit to feed His children. Every movement of the goddess gave rise to some distinct species.

I think the whole tradition was supposed to give the origin of all the plants to be found in the Penobscot and Kennebec valleys.

My father was a classical scholar, and he saw the analogy between this legend and the story of Persephone, the Greek goddess of vegetation; but it seemed to him as if the Indian version bore internal evidence of originality. The Penobscot legend, if told in full, with all its native plants, would, I think, fit no other place in the universe.

The American Indian is very reticent, and he will generally allow you to think that he recalls no legends rather than to speak when he prefers

to keep silence; but if you can persuade him to unlock the treasures in his stories of the *old*, OLD time (which was long before the white men came to these shores), you will find a wealth of poetic imagery. The Indian will rarely waste his folk-lore stories on those who are unable to appreciate them.

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